

MCAS Communicator

an e-newsletter for the staff of the Michigan City Area Schools

Back-to-School Edition 2019

(Please post for/share with those employees who do not check email!)

WELCOME BACK!

Welcome back, Team M.C.A.S.! You are reading the "MCAS Communicator," the monthly e-newsletter for all staff. If you know a colleague who does not regularly access email, please share! If you have news or other info you would like to include, please email Betsy Kohn at bkohn@educateMC.net before the last day of the month. The Communicator goes out the first school day of each month. Back issues are located under the "Staff" channel on our district home page.

Team MCAS Polos

If you didn't get a new polo shirt at the back to school meeting, never fear! There are many shirts, in 3 colors, available for purchase at Reprographic Arts. Also, to all of the Team Coaches and Club Sponsors – RA would love to provide you with shirts and signage for your teams or clubs. Call for a quote! Stop by Reprographic Arts at 2824 E Michigan Blvd, or Call 219.872.9111

Yes, we are EducateMC

Did you realize that your email address also works as xxx@educateMC.net? It's true... you do not need to use [@mcas.k12.in.us](mailto:xxx@mcas.k12.in.us). Our website is ALSO just <http://educateMC.net> - no need to use a longer URL. All of our schools also have web address shortcuts (e.g., <http://educateMC.net/barker>). Try it!

Your Staff I.D. = Your Free Ticket

Did you know your staff ID badge gets you in free to all MCAS home athletic events? Please come out and support our fall athletes! For a schedule of events visit the athletics web site at <http://michigancityathletics.com>

Homecoming

MCHS Homecoming is early this year - September 20th! If your school/group would like to have a unit in the parade (which steps off from Elston parking lot at 6pm) please contact Katie St. Germaine (kstgermaine@mcas.k12.in.us) or Elaine Rivich (erivich@mcas.k12.in.us).

Teacher Appreciation at Ames

September 6 is "Teacher Appreciation Night" at halftime during the City vs Chesterton game. All teachers are invited to sit in a reserved area and will be honored at halftime. See below for the official invite:

<https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//August%202019/TeacherAppreciationNite2019.pdf>

Tailgate Party!

The Wolves are also holding a "Game Day Tailgate Party" on Friday, September 6, prior to the Chesterton game. The event is at the Plant Planning parking lot across from Ames Field, from 3-7pm. Purchase a port-a-pit ticket for \$10 from the MCHS athletic dept or any fall

athlete; call 873-2043 or contact Craig Shaman at cshaman@educateMC.net. Please share the flyer below:

<https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//August%202019/ailgateparty2019.pdf>

ALERT! ALERT! Unity Grant Deadline Approaching

The deadline for Unity Foundation teacher grants is Friday, September 13. Right now they have very few applicants for these mini grants - your chances are GREAT! Apply today!

<https://ufic.net/grants/teacher-grants/>

Donors Choose

Fun Fact: During the 2018–2019 school year, the DonorsChoose.org community of donors (individual citizens, philanthropic, and corporate) donated \$38,844 towards new classroom resources for Michigan City Area Schools. This supported 48 teachers across the district!

DonorsChoose.org is free for districts and schools to use and ships materials, not cash, to classrooms. Log on to start your grant app today!

Free and Confidential Mental Health Services

As an employee of MCAS, you qualify for 6 FREE mental health counseling sessions for you and your immediate family members. This is part of our "EAP" (Employee Assistance Program). Click on the link below for more information on this important service:

<https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//August%202018/2018%20You%20are%20not%20alone%20poster.pdf>

August EAP Newsletter

Kindness is good for your health!

<https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//August%202019/EAP%20August%202019.pdf>

Tickets at Work Perk

Don't forget! MCAS is a member of "Tickets at Work" -- which gives our employees discounts for travel, entertainment, and more. Here is info and the login information:

https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//August%202019/Enroll_TAW.pdf

Teacher Store

Below is information about the Feed the Children Teacher Store in Elkhart, along with a shopping calendar for 2019-2020. Many who have been to the store in the past have found this to be a valuable free resource! The store will be open on Tuesdays/Thursdays beginning Sept 10th. Please note they have cut back on their hours this year -- they are open until 5:00pm Eastern Time and they close their doors at 4:45pm. MCAS has provided them with a list of all teachers. Please take a moment to review the info below note their rules -- you must be a classroom teacher, no guests are allowed to shop, and etc.

[Teacher Store Calendar](#)

[Teacher Store Information Summary](#)

CPR for Certified Staff

A CPR class for certified staff in need of license renewal will be held Thursday, September 19th at 3:30pm at Mullen (100 Manny Court). The cost is \$50, cash or check, payable to Dolphin Solutions at the class. Class lasts approximately 2 hours. CPR books are available to borrow from any nurse's office, if you need to review prior to the class. Important: Please contact Linda Bechinski in advance to reserve your spot for this class, or with any questions - lbechinski@educateMC.net.

Back to School Rally

Thanks to ALL who volunteered, exhibited and attended the 2019 Back to School Rally! There were extra backpacks left, at all grade levels. See your school social worker or counselor if you know of a student in need! .

Stop Arm Singers are POP-U-LAR!

Congratulations to our bus drivers and monitors -- your "Stop When the Arm is Out" video has officially gone viral! This has received media attention across our state and beyond and has reached over 120,000 people on Facebook, where it has been viewed 59,000+ times and shared by 1,571 people. On YouTube it's been viewed another 11,628 times... so far! If by some chance you haven't viewed or shared this yet...please do so! This is a great message and a wonderful positive for our district.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ccIWONMMo7s&t=92s>

<https://www.facebook.com/educateMC/videos/423263034950798/>

Trivia Contest

Get your team together! Our "Future Wolves" program is having another Trivia Night to raise funds for MCAS elementary sports. It will be held at the Michigan City Senior Center on Friday, September 27. Food and drinks available for purchase. Trophy and bragging rights to the winner! See the flyer below, and see you there!

<https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//August%202019/TriviaFlyer2019.pdf>

YMCA News

Did you know that MCAS employees receive a 25% discount on YMCA memberships? Stop by the Elston YMCA for more information, or visit: <https://www.lpymca.org>. Two upcoming events they hope will be a success include a FREE "Safety Around Water" clinic (weeks of Aug 19 and 26, Monday-Thursday at 4:00 or 4:45) and a FREE Basketball Skills clinic August 24th and 31st from 8am-11am. Many other programs start in September. And finally, the Elston YMCA is wanting to partner with schools and teachers this year to bring the Y to YOU. (Example: they are planning a safety around water presentation for 6th graders at Coolspring.) Teachers and staff can reach out for more information to Kathy Workman, kworkman@lpymca.org.

Solid Waste Class Presentations

Below is a list of the class presentations available from Solid Waste District of La Porte County. This year each class that signs up will receive a rectangular recycling receptacle for use in their classroom (limit one per classroom). Most presentations are interactive and will have students up on their feet to learn more about recycling, composting, and household hazardous waste. For details, contact Sacha Gee-Burns, Environmental Educator/ Public Outreach Coordinator, Solid Waste District, 219-326-0014, sgeeburns@solidwastedistrict.com

<https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//August%202019/Class%20Offerings.png>

Community Backpack is now PEACHJAR

Our online "Community Backpack" has been replaced by a digital flyer service called Peachjar that is much more visually engaging and enables us to reach families (and building staff) directly with school and community flyers through our mass notification system. If you would like to opt in for flyers from Peachjar for one or more of our schools, you can sign up to receive them at <http://peachjar.com>. Or, you can click the "Peachjar" button on any school page anytime to view the latest!

United Way Update

Our employee giving campaign is under way! THANK YOU to all who donated at our back-to-school kickoff. United Way of LaPorte County agencies increase educational opportunities for students. *Last year, almost 20,000 unduplicated youth participated in enrichment programming.* You should have received a pledge form in your school mailbox last week. All donations receive a gift. Please donate to United Way! United we fight, united we win, LIVE UNITED! (And remember, save the date for the United Way Car Wash on September 12th!)

<https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//August%202019/United%20Way%20Pledge%20Form.pdf>

Give Back for Pine

Pine Elementary is having a give-back event at Panera on Wednesday next week. Please show the flyer below!

<https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//August%202019/PinePanera.pdf>

Dodgeball Players Wanted

The Michigan City Chamber is partnering with the La Porte County YMCA – Michigan City branch for a fun evening of tours, ribbon cutting, and Dodge Ball on Thursday, August 29th. They are seeking at least 8 teams to compete in a FUN and FREE Dodge Ball tournament, which begins at 5:30. Anyone willing to play for TEAM MCAS please contact Betsy Kohn - bkohn@educateMC.net. (We need 10 players and 3 must be female.)

Cinderella Auditions

There is a new youth theatre program based at MCHS called Centerstage Youth Theatre! This is for students in elementary and middle school; organizers are hoping to build a strong feeder system for the high school theatre program. First up: auditions for Cinderella, which will be staged in November. Cinderella auditions will take place at MCHS on Saturday, August 24. This is for students ages 7-11. A flyer with details is here:

<https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//August%202019/Cinderella%20Auditions.pdf>

Singing Co. of LaPorte County

The Singing Company of LP County children's chorus invites students in grades 2-8 to join them. First rehearsal is September 3. Details are here:

<https://www.mcas.k12.in.us/cms/lib/IN01001792/Centricity/Domain/85//August%202019/SingingCo.pdf>

WAY TO GO!

- Barker Middle School teacher **Mariah Pol** has been named the 2019 Indiana History Teacher of the Year by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History!
- Barker Middle School teachers **Greg Olson** and **Mariah Pol** were selected as nominees for the 2020 Indiana Teacher of the Year!
- Michigan City High School Guidance Counselor **Rhonda LaMarr** has been selected as Indiana's Exemplary High School Counselor of the Year by the Indiana School Counseling Association. She will be honored at an awards luncheon in November.
- Michigan City High School Government and Economics teacher **Alexander Uryga** has been named a 2019-20 Teach Plus Indiana Policy Fellow. The Fellowship is a highly selective, rigorous program for teachers who want to deepen their knowledge in education policy and expand their influence—without leaving the classroom.

- Michigan City High School teacher **Mark Marz** was named Indiana Division Teacher of the Year for 2019 by the Izaak Walton League of America.
- Michigan City High School social studies teacher **Kristen Freitag** has received the Olin W. Davis Award for Exemplary Teaching of Economics. Kristen was one of only 4 teachers in Indiana named as a finalist for this recognition, and she was honored by the Indiana Council for Economic Education this summer.
- Barker teacher **Amy Hamann** and Lake Hills STEM Coordinator **Shelley Deutscher** have been accepted into the Ford Next Generation Learning program as Project-Based Learning coaches. Over the coming year, Ford will support them in developing, designing, and facilitating high-quality project-based learning projects for students and in facilitating learning experiences for their colleagues.
- MCHS teacher **Ashley Kohler** was honored by the premier volleyball news and recruiting website, PrepVolleyball. Ashley was named to their list of top 20 athletes nationwide over the last 20 years. As a libero for MCHS, she was ranked #1 in the nation, and then went on to a successful volleyball career at the University of Illinois and was a member of Team USA volleyball at the junior world championships.
- **Michigan City High School** was recognized at the Indiana State House by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education and INvestEd for obtaining over 70% completion of the FAFSA, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Kudos to College and Career Readiness Coordinator Aaron Garrett and the entire MCHS Guidance team!

Upcoming Events

- August 20 - [6th grade band instrument try-outs at MCHS](#) (4-7pm)
- August 21 - MCHS Open House 5:30-7:00
- September 2 - Labor Day NO SCHOOL
- September 11 - Remembrance ceremony at Elston YMCA/AKS/Elston
- September 12 - United Way Car Wash (MCAS Administrators' shift - 3-6pm)
- September 13 - Unity teacher grant application deadline
- September 20 - Homecoming (Parade 6pm, Game 7pm)
- September 27 - Trivia Night benefit for "Future Wolves," Senior Center (7pm)
- **September 30 - eLearning day**
- October 4 - Made in LaPorte County
- October 14 - Deadline for nominations, Chamber Educator of Year
- October 17-18 - Fall Break
- October 24 - Howl O Ween at Ames
- **November 5 - eLearning Day (Election Day)**
- November 6 - AKS Open House
- November 12 - Chamber Educator of the Year Awards
- November 15-17 - MCHS Fall Musical "Ghost"
- November 25-29 - Thanksgiving Break NO SCHOOL
- **December 9 - eLearning Day**
- December 12 - One City One Sound
- December 23 - Jan 3 - Winter Break NO SCHOOL

#MCASGiantLeaps